

EMBASSY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN  
WASHINGTON DC

March 18, 2008

**Re: Request for Information Regarding Development and Maintenance of  
the List of Goods From Countries Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor**

Via electronic submission: ILAB-TVPRA@DOL.GOV

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In response to Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), Department of Labor's notice published in the Federal Register on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007 seeking information or comments during the process initiated by ILAB, leading to the development and maintenance of a list of goods from countries that ILAB believes are produced by Child labor or Forced labor, in violation of international standards as required under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, the Government of Pakistan, through its Embassy in Washington DC would like to make the following submissions for ILAB's consideration:

- i) Steps Taken for Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labor in Pakistan;
- ii) Steps Taken by Province of Punjab in Pakistan for Elimination of Bonded and Child Labor.

As these submissions indicate, significant progress has been made by Pakistan in addressing the Child and Forced labor issue. The achievements made towards elimination of Child and Forced labor have been acknowledged, amongst others by ILO and US government's Department of Labor (DOL).

We appreciate the opportunity provided to us for participating in the process initiated for this purpose by ILAB and look forward to working closely with the US Department of Labor in an effort to achieve these mutually shared objectives.

Yours sincerely,

  
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**Steps Taken for Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour in Pakistan**

The National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Child Labour was launched in May 2000. It defines the policies; strategies; activities and responsibilities of different agencies; timeframe; delivery system; and funding for child labour elimination. The Plan is being implemented by the provincial governments and other relevant government agencies to achieve the following objectives:

- Progressive elimination of child labour from all economic sectors.
- Immediate withdrawal of children from worst forms of child labour.
- Preventing entry of under-aged children into the labour market through universalization of primary education and family empowerment.
- Rehabilitation of working children through non-formal education, pre-vocational training and skill development.'

2. In pursuance of the Policy objective of eliminating worst forms of child labour on priority basis, the Ministry of Labour has taken a number of steps as follows:

- The Government of Pakistan ratified the ILO Convention 182 in 2001.
- In pursuance of the Convention, exhaustive consultation was carried out to identify the most hazardous occupations for the purpose of the Convention.
- Twenty-nine hazardous occupations have been identified. These processes were notified in December 2005 to become part of the Employment of Children Act, 1991. This has enhanced the scope of the Employment of Children Act, 1991 and reduced the space for child labour. Now employment of children is prohibited in 4 (hazardous) occupations and 34 processes. Previously number of such occupations and processes was 6 and 14, respectively.
- The ILO's Project of support to develop national Time Bound Programme for elimination of worst forms of child labour is also being run in Pakistan since 2002. The objective is to create enabling environment to remove children from hazardous work, link former working children and their families to sustainable alternatives through strategically designed interventions, and ensure that new children are prevented from entering the worst forms of labour through provision of viable development opportunities. A number of activities have been carried out under the Project for mobilization of political and social commitment, development of adequate databases, undertaking in-depth research of policy studies, and consultations on the formulation of the initial framework for Pakistan's Time-Bound Programme. The policy studies, the consultative process, social mobilization and capacity building have

helped towards creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Time Bound Programme, while base line and rapid surveys on different worst forms of child labour have been used to design direct interventions in selected worst forms of child labour.

- Rapid assessments, baseline studies and Occupational Health and Safety Studies have been carried out in the following hazardous sectors:

*Rapid Assessments*

- Deep Sea Fishing, Sea Food Processing; and Ship Breaking
- Scavenging (Rag-Pickers)

*Base Line Surveys*

- Coal Mining
- Tanneries
- Surgical Instruments Manufacturing; and
- Glass Bangle Manufacturing

*OSH Studies*

- Coal Mining
  - Tanneries
  - Surgical Instruments Manufacturing
  - Glass Bangle
  - Rag-Picking
  - Fishing
- Under the ILO's Project of Support, certain direct interventions have been piloted. Projects in six selected sectors have been launched since early 2006. Through these projects, the targeted children are being withdrawn from hazardous working conditions and provided basic adult literacy, life skills and OSH awareness. A selected number of these children are linked with vocational training opportunities enabling them to switch over to other non-hazardous trades or to work under non-hazardous conditions within the same trade. A selected number of target children are also linked with financial assistance to continue their education and vocational training through available credit facilities and social safety nets. Selected families of the target children are linked with available micro-credit facilities in the district. The empowerment of these families is having a significant impact in the withdrawal of the target children from the hazardous conditions. The Projects are enlisted in the following:
    - i. Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour from the Tanneries Industries, Kasur
    - ii. Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour from the Surgical Instruments Manufacturing Industry, Sialkot
    - iii. Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour from the Glass Bangle Industry, Hyderabad

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- iv. Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour from Deep Sea Fishing Industry, Gwadar
  - v. Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour from Rag-Picking Sector in Rawalpindi and Islamabad
  - vi. Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour from Coal Mining; Shangla, Chakw
- An initial Strategic Programme Framework for the TBP has also been developed. The Framework identifies linkages between different policies and strategies of the government that can have a collective impact on elimination of worst forms of child labour.
  - Based on the experiences of the aforementioned ILO's project of support to the TBP, the Ministry of Labour is currently in the process of preparing the National Time-Bound Plan/Programme (NTBP) for elimination of worst forms of child labour. The NTBP tends to develop a framework, built upon the existing policy instruments available at the national, provincial and district levels, for eliminating worst forms of child labour and prohibiting future entry of children in such occupations. The NTBP will outline a coordination mechanism among the stakeholders with a timeframe to mutually achieve the targets. An initial draft has already been prepared. Now the Ministry is going to share this document with the stakeholders through regional/national level consultations during the next two months. The purpose is to devise a pragmatic and realistic Plan/Programme with real contribution of social partners.
  - Pakistan Baitul Mal has established 150 National Centres for Rehabilitation of Child Labour to the children withdrawn from hazardous workplaces. Children between the age of 5-14 years are weaned away from hazardous labour and enrolled in these centres where they are provided free education, clothing, footwear and stipend as well as subsistence allowance to their parents. Present strength of NCRCL centres is 151 (Punjab - 66, Sindh - 36, NWFP + FATA – 25, Balochistan - 14, ICT/AJK & N.A - 10). At present 15,045 students (Male & Female separately) are benefiting from primary education in these centers. Since inspection an amount of Rs. 716.2464 (m) has been utilized.
  - The Child Care Foundation has opened Non Formal Education Centres for imparting education to carpet weaving children 215 non Formal Education Centers have been set up in Lahore, Sheikhpura, Attock and Karachi. Over 7000 working children are receiving free education & vocational training; 525 children have completed primary education and 976 children have been mainstreamed into government schools. 774 girl students have so far been imparted vocational training.
  - Under different IPEC projects about 75000 children have been withdrawn from hazardous workplaces (mostly involved in football stitching, carpet weaving, surgical instruments manufacturing, automobile workshops, etc.) and imparted informal/formal education.
  - A project 'Activating Media to Combat Worst Forms of Child Labour' is being run since June 2003 to use the electronic and print media to raise awareness

among general public, relevant agencies, parents and communities on the issue of child labour. Another objective of the Project is to mobilize social partners and stakeholders against the worst forms of child labour. A number of programmes of discussion, documentaries, dramas, etc. have been/are being aired by PTV and PBC under this project.

- The Government of Pakistan is shortly initiating another Programme with the assistance of European Union. The Programme aims at undertaking immediate measures to eliminate worst forms of child labour, introduce alternative options to working children and their families, prevent more children at risk from joining hazardous jobs and gradually phasing out child labour from the informal sector. The Programme envisages taking sustained action against child labour particularly its worst forms; and developing a district based holistic model to reduce child labour across sectors in the target districts.
  
- A project 'Combating Child Labour in the Carpet Industry in Pakistan' is being run since 1999. The project is in the second phase and is now spread in nine districts in Punjab and one district in Sindh. The Project is funded by the US Department of Labour, Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association and Government of Pakistan (Trade Development Authority of Pakistan). The Project is designed to target about 26000 carpet weaving children and their siblings for their withdrawal/prohibition from working in carpet weaving and their education/prevocational training. The Project is also providing income generation opportunities to the family adults and improving OSH at the workplaces. So far about 8000 carpet weaving children and 1904 families and 1140 females have benefited from different components of the programme. Under the project, an ergonomic loom has been developed which has won international prize. Mass level production of this loom is being started.

## **STEPS TAKEN BY PUNJAB FOR ELIMINATION OF BONDED AND CHILD LABOUR**

The phenomenon of child and bonded labour was one of the blackest spots on the province's polity. Now it is declining throughout the country, the province of Punjab has been at the forefront of efforts directed to eliminate this menace. A number of provincial policies and programs actively aim towards fulfillment of this aim. In its recent report, the International Labour Organization (ILO) acknowledges that globally the phenomenon of child labour is receding and the number of child labourers worldwide fell by 11 per cent between 2000 and 2004, from 246 million to 218 million. Similarly, the number of children and youth aged 5-17 trapped in hazardous work decreased by 26 per cent, to reach 126 million in 2004 as opposed to 171 million in the previous estimate.

2. Widespread presence of child and bonded labour has been a harsh reality, being embedded in the cultural and traditional settings of the land and has roots in socio political and economic conditions of the country. Inequitable distribution of wealth and resources (including landlessness), limited availability access to education, health, clean drinking water and other social services, cultural and traditional factors coupled with explosive rate of population growth were some of the major causes for presence of poverty as well as bonded and child labour. The National Child Labour survey conducted in 1996 by the Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, found 3.3 million of the 40 million children (in the 5-14 years age group) to be economically active on a full-time basis. Of the 3.3 million working children (of which 1.94 million were in Punjab) 73 per cent (2.4 million) were boys and 27 per cent (0.9 million), girls. Children's contribution to work in rural areas was about eight times greater than in urban areas. The number of economically active children in the 10-14 years age group was more than four times the children in the 5-9 years age group. The situation, however, is definitely not the same at present.

3. Cognizant of these issues, the Government of Pakistan expressed its commitment through formulation of National Policies and Plans of Action to deal with the child labour and bonded labour and has also ratified all the core ILO conventions in this regard. The Supreme Court of Pakistan is also actively pursuing the cause of bonded and child labour, especially brick kilns workers, and created a special cell to deal with such complaints. A number of policy actions and development interventions have been initiated to effectively deal with this menace. These efforts have already been acknowledged in the ILO report, especially efforts made in the wake of devastating earthquake which prevented a large number of children joining hazardous work as well as success stories of soccer ball industry in Pakistan vis-à-vis elimination of child labour.

4. Some of the interventions initiated by the provincial government as well as other stakeholders, especially in Punjab, are listed below:

### **i. Labour Department's efforts in combating child labour**

Labour & Human Resource Department, Government of the Punjab is playing active role in combating child labour in the province. A number of policy and governance reforms have been introduced to improve governance, reform institutions, introduce transparency and provide increased access to social services the poor. These reforms directly aim to reduce poverty and eliminate bondage of all kinds. Similarly, a number of development interventions, under the Medium Term Development Frameworks, directly target bonded and child labour. Some of the efforts are:

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- **Enforcement of the protective legislation relating to the child labour;**
- **Situational analysis of child labour in various sectors of economy;**
- **Creating awareness amongst the relevant segments of society;**
- **Strengthening the existing organizations especially the Directorate of Labour Welfare Punjab; and**
- **Involvement of tripartite partners in policy formulation and direct action.**

The provincial government has been actively pursuing to implement the relevant laws. The number of inspections carried out under various child labour laws (Employment of Children Act 1991, Factories Act, 1934 and Shops & Establishments Ordinance 1969) for the last 10 years are as under

<b>Act/Ordinance</b>	<b>Inspections</b>	<b>Prosecution</b>	<b>Cases decided</b>	<b>Fine imposed (in Rs.)</b>
Employment of Children Act, 1991	689,030	17,486	21,347	245,850/-
Factories Act, 1934	10,059	4,184	2,474	508,416/-
Shops & Establishment Ordinance, 1969	213,492	14,627	21,652	750,615/-

A number of surveys were carried out to identify the sectors -both locations and businesses- employing child labour in various sectors of economy. These surveys have resulted in action-oriented projects and programs for rehabilitation of child labour. Some of these surveys are listed below:

**Details of Survey and Mapping of Child Labour 1998-2002**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Title of Survey</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>District</b>
1	Survey of child labour in the brick kiln manufacturing in Sialkot District	1998	Sialkot
2	Survey of child labour in auto-workshops in Sialkot District	1998	Sialkot
3	Survey of child labour in the steel furnaces and spare parts manufacturing spare industry in Baghbanpura area of Lahore	1998	Lahore
4	Survey of child labour in tanneries in Kasur	1998	Kasur

5	A survey of child labour in auto workshops in Lahore	1999	Lahore
6	A survey of child labour in soccer ball industry	1996	Sialkot
7	A survey of child labour in surgical instruments industry	1996	Sialkot
8	A survey of child labour in auto parts manufacturing industry in Baghbanpura	1998	Lahore
9	Occupational Health and safety Risk Assessment of Child Workers in Carpet Industry	2002	Sheikhupura/ Gujranwala
10	Occupational safety and health risk assessment studies of child labour in 6 hazardous sectors including; i) Tanneries ii) Coal mines iii) Bangle making iv) Scavenging v) Surgical instruments manufacture vi) Fishing/ship-breaking	2003	Different districts

**ii. Child Labour Resource Centre established in the Labour Department to provide focal point for awareness and capacity building activities**

A Child Labour Resource Centre (CLRC) ([www.clrg.org.pk](http://www.clrg.org.pk)) has been established by the Labour & HR Department, Government of Punjab. The main objective of CLRC is to provide a platform to stakeholders for networking and sharing their experiences and launching joint efforts to combat child labour.

**Activities:**

- Networking of the stakeholders particularly the NGOs, trade unions, students/teachers, employers, government agencies, journalists, local councilors, political leaders and academia for joint action to combat child labour.
- Establishment of reference centre having publications on child labour issue from all over the world and encourage research by universities and other institutions on different aspects of child labour.
- Preparation of training materials for the government inspectors, social workers, and other stakeholders.
- Holding of regular training sessions for all the stakeholders focusing mainly on identification of "worst forms of child labour" and direct and indirect interventions for elimination of such child labour.
- Holding of consultative meetings, workshops and seminars for planning joint action on child labour issue by all social partners.
- Interaction with international donor agencies for mobilizing support to the initiatives by different partners.

### Urdu Training Kit on Child Labour

An Urdu Training Kit on Child Labour was developed by the Child Labour Resource Centre as a tool for building capacity of stakeholders to play effective role in combating child labour. As very little capacity building material is available in Urdu so the training efforts of all our partners were hampered as most important trainees specially Labour Inspectors, trade union officials, community leaders, and common public do not understand English. This Kit was welcomed by all stakeholders and is being used extensively for holding training not only of CLRC but by other organizations. This Kit contains modules on statistics, economic, social legal, enforcement and other aspects of child labour.

One -day training sessions are regularly held in which this Kit is introduced and some essential modules have been taught. The participants of each training session include inspecting officers of Labour Department, NGO and trade unions representatives and other stakeholders. This training provides an opportunity to the stakeholders to work out coordinated strategies for combating child labour. The details of trainings held in the last two years are given below:

### Schedule of the Training Courses

Dates of First Series	Dates of Second Series	Venue
Jan , 2006	Jan, 2007	CLRC Training Room Township Lahore
Feb. 2006	Feb, 2007	CLRC Training Room Township Lahore
Apr, 2006	Mar, 2007	CLRC Training Room Township Lahore
August, 2006	Mar, 2007	CLRC Training Room Township Lahore
Nov, 2006	Apr, 2007	CLRC Training Room Township Lahore
Nov 2006	Apr, 2007	National Hotel (Opp. General Bus Stand Sargodha Road Faisalabad)

With the help of ILO carpet project, a special campaign was also carried out in 2006 for raising community awareness on hazards faced by child workers in the carpet weaving sector. The highlights of this campaign are:

- A total of 20000 posters on 8 different themes as well as one video on ergonomic loom and 2 booklets (5000 each) were produced.
- 500 holding kits of training materials were produced for distribution to carpet businessmen, government functionaries and other important stakeholders.
- 209 sessions were held at the locations identified with the assistance of project partners, in which over 14000 participants were provided training.

**iii. Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program**

Recognizing that illiteracy and lack of education is the root cause of poverty and child labour, Government of the Punjab, with support from the World Bank, launched a major programme in 2003 for enhancing the spread and quality of educational services in the province. Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program (PERSP). The Program aims to improve access, quality and governance in the education sector. Since its launch, enrollment for both boys and girls has substantially increased at all levels, although at a higher rate for girls as a result of which Punjab is seeing a narrowing of the gender gap. Sector governance has improved through robust monitoring, independent validations, and improvements in financial management. The Program maintains an active website to inform about its activities and achievements ([www.persp.edu.pk](http://www.persp.edu.pk)).

Key achievements of the Program are:

- Total enrollments (Pre-Primary - Grade 10) have increased at a rate of 20% since the start of the reform program from 8.8 million students to 10.6 million students (1.8 million more students);
- In October 2003, girls made up 43% of total public school enrollment (Grades 1 - 12), moving to 44.5% in 2004, and 45% in May 2005, closer to the Government's target of 49%;
- Primary completion rate in government schools has increased from 58% to 61%.

**iv. Special Measures taken to Combat Child Labour**

A number of action oriented projects targeting specific sectors of industries in Punjab have been launched by Government of Pakistan with the assistance of ILO, employers' organizations, workers organizations and other stakeholders. Some of the major programs are presented below:

**Combating Child Labour in the Carpet Industry in Pakistan**

In 1998 the Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exports Association (PCMEA) entered into a Partners Agreement with International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour of International Labour Organization (ILO-IPEC) to combat child labour in the carpet industry in Pakistan. Within the framework of that Agreement, and drawing upon an earlier experience in combating child labour in the soccer ball industry, the project entitled '*Combating Child Labour in the Carpet Industry in Pakistan*' was launched in 1999 with financial support from US Department of Labor and PCMEA. The PCMEA has so far contributed US\$1.8 million and has committed another US\$1.2 million to continue the program. The project is in its second phase now and has helped fight child labour from carpet-weaving sector in 10 districts of Punjab.

The project objectives were pursued through two interrelated components, namely *Prevention and Monitoring* and *Social Protection*. Under the prevention and monitoring component,

involvement of child labour was noticed / identified and efforts made to ensure their removal from carpet-weaving as well as enrolment in non-formal education classes, conducted in the project-supported education centers located throughout the target districts. The nonformal education programme comprises the main part of the social protection component of the project, together with the provision of pre-vocational education to older carpet weaving children, as well as extending support for income generating activities to carpet weaving families. Over a period of 9 years, the project has contributed significantly towards elimination of child labour from the carpet weaving sector, as over 26,000 carpet weaving children and their young siblings have been rehabilitated through non-formal education through the project. The monitoring component of the project has verified that owing to their attendance in non-formal education classes, these children were being removed and prevented gradually from weaving carpets. The major achievements of both phases of this project are highlighted below:

### **Progress of Phase I**

- 306 Non Formal Education (NFE) centres established under the Project complete their NFE cycle on 31 August 2003
- 10,261 children (8,681 carpet-weavers consisting of 7,236 girls and 1,443 boys; and 1,580 younger siblings consisting of 1,187 girls and 393 boys) have graduated from the NFE centres.
- 1,560 children from NFE centers have been mainstreamed into the formal education system, thus completely withdrawn from carpel weaving.
- 2,167 monitoring visits were conducted by the ILO-IPEC monitors in the NFE centres to monitor children attending NFEs.
- 2,879 monitoring visits were conducted in the households and carpet-weaving sheds by the ILO-IPEC monitors to verify the absence of child labour.
- Working hours of children were reduced by four to five hours daily (on average).
- 228 contractors joined Village Education Committees or VECs.
- 187 VEFs (Village Education Fund) established in the project areas with the community contribution of Rs.245,909 (USD 4,314) to benefit 228 NFE centres in 137 villages.
- 31 trainers have been trained, in collaboration with government training institutes reserved for females (called Sanelzars) of Punjab Social Welfare Department.
- A study on 'Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Risk Assessment of Child Workers in the Carpet Industry' conducted by the Center for the Improvement of Working Conditions & Environment, Punjab Labour Department, recommended gradual reduction in working hours of the children, awareness raising for employers/parents/communities etc., providing basic healthcare facilities to working children improving working conditions and environment, and designing ergonomic loom to minimize discomfort in carpet weaving for adult labour.
- A programme on health screening and treatment of common ailments suffered by carpet-weaving children was also implemented. Under this 8,710 children have been examined and provided with medication for common ailments related to carpet weaving, such as respiratory congestions, skin diseases and painful hands and legs. 100 awareness raising sessions have been conducted for 9,620 participants (66% females) consisting of parents, community leaders, contractors & children. Awareness raising material consisting 3 training videos, 3 booklets and around 24,000 posters produced focusing on OSH.

### **Progress of Phase II**

- 7,840 children (6,823 carpet-weavers consisting of 5,614 girls and 1,009 boys; and 1,217 younger siblings consisting of 959 girls and 258 boys) have graduated from 240 centers for Education and Support Services (ESS);
- A total of 6,308 children (5,235 girls and 1,073 boys) have been mainstreamed into formal schools (77 percent of total). Out of these 80 percent are girls, which reflects the level of awareness raised in the parents about the importance of their children's education, especially of girls;
- 150 VEFs (Village Education Fund) established in the project areas with the community contribution of Rs.231,980 (US\$4,069) to benefit 186 ESS centers in 113 villages.

### **The Income-Generation and Micro-Credit Programme**

- Micro-Credit of around Rs.22,174,000 (USD369,667) was disbursed to 1958 adult female members of the families of children enrolled in the NFE centers;
- 340 new family enterprises, such as small grocery shops, cow milking, bangle selling, embroidery etc. were established;
- 1,567 families were provided with income generation skill training.

### **Pre-Vocational Education**

- 123 PVE centers were established in the selected areas of Sheikhpura, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh and Multan districts, in which 3,161 children were enrolled;
- Training in four basic trades i.e. tailoring, embroidery, tie & dye and carpet designing was provided;
- Networking with Pre-Vocational Education providers such as “Sanat Zar” in the relevant districts, were establish for the possible mainstreaming of trained children to formal systems.

### **Award winning adult-friendly loom being promoted by the Punjab Government to combat hazardous child labour in carpet weaving.**

The present carpet weaving methods have not undergone changes for centuries. The carpet weavers face a number of occupational health and safety hazards which were identified through a study. Musculoskeletal problems in the form of aches and pains, deformities and cumulative trauma disorders as well as serious accidents are caused due to poor design of carpet loom. The task of carpel weaving is hazardous for children.

Based on the findings of a study of safety and health hazards in the carpal weaving sector, the Centre for the Improvement of Working Conditions & Environment within the Labour & Human Resource Department Government of the Punjab designed an ergonomic carpet weaving loom, which significantly reduces the health and safety hazards of the carpet weavers and enhances their productivity and helps in the fight against hazardous child labour in this sector. The loom designed for carpet-weavers was extensively tested with the help of ILO-USDOL-PCMEA to see its acceptability by poor and illiterate families. After repeated trials, the model looms and working environment controls were installed in thirty workplaces in the districts of Sheikhpura, Gujranwala and Hafizabad.

All the families who were provided these looms are sending their children below 14 years to non formal education centres, and young workers are now learning the trade in a safe and healthy work environment. The adults, especially women, are taking up the work as they do not suffer

from frequent aches and pains as on the traditional loom. The new loom has enhanced their productivity and earnings up to 100 percent. 58.3% of the loom users have reported that their income has improved as a result of work at ergonomic carpet loom. The improvement mainly due to comfortable working posture and improved health and also due to freedom the families now have due to possession of their own loom. They can work for any contractor who offers a better deal. The traditional looms are usually owned by the contractors who then dictate the wages and terms of business of the families. The carpet businessmen and international organizations like ILO have welcomed this development and are exploring the possibilities of propagating this model not only in Pakistan but other countries of the region where carpet weaving is carried out. In fact the success of this loom has given an impetus to work in other sectors for tackling hazardous child labour by improving the working conditions of adults and improving their productivity and health.

This loom has won a prestigious international award called Tech Award of Innovation Benefiting Humanity of USA and it was declared the best innovation in its category from around the world.

Through a project funded by the Government of Punjab, 3,000 ergonomic looms are being provided to carpet weavers at subsidized cost in 12 districts. The project aims to become a model for gradual elimination of hazardous child labour from carpet weaving by replacing it with adult workforce and empowering carpet weavers, especially women workers, through promotion of Ergonomic looms and OSH measures in the workplace.

### **Combating Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour in Surgical Instruments Manufacturing**

This project has been implemented by ILO with the help of Italian Government and Surgical Instruments Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (SIMAP) in Sialkot district of Punjab. The project was aimed to:

Withdraw children from surgical instruments manufacturing, prevent their entry into surgical instruments manufacturing and provide appropriate rehabilitation, prevention, and protection to the children and families targeted by the programme;

Strengthen the capacity of the social partners (employers' and workers' organizations) to prevent and progressively eliminate child labour in the surgical instruments industry.

Over a period of two years, the project has contributed to the reduction of child labour in this sector. Under its direct action programmes, 1,496 children employed in surgical instruments production workshops have been provided non-formal education and pre-vocational training. Attendance in these programmes has resulted in substantially reduced working hours for the children. In its second phase, the project has been expanded to cover larger numbers of children. Around 1,200 children aged 14 years and below, working in the surgical instruments industry in Sialkot district, have been targeted to benefit from the project through the provisions of non-formal education, pre-vocational training and other support services. The second phase of the project has been successfully completed.

### **Special program for vulnerable children including trafficked children**

Government of the Punjab set up Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) to rehabilitate special and deprived children and those engaged in begging. The Bureau has managed to

effectively eliminated child beggary from major cities and towns of the province. Children so removed are rehabilitated and mainstreamed into formal education system, under a phased manner.

CPWB has played pivotal role in rehabilitating child labour illegally trafficked to UAE for camel racing as jockeys. In collaboration with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Bureau is helping rehabilitate these children with their families and environs. Similar Child Protection Units have been established in 7 cities of the province, where street children and beggars are rehabilitated through education, counseling and healthcare. Since the launch of this initiative, 2,000 children have been recovered from different gangs and rehabilitated. Similarly, 1,800 children have been restored to their parents and 17 gangs involved in forcing children into beggary have been smashed and 26 cases have been registered. Similarly several hundred children used in camel races in Gulf States have been recovered and the government is implementing a comprehensive program for providing them health, education, training and accommodation facilities

### **Special Initiatives by an NGO to rehabilitate children at brick kilns**

Pak Swedish Teachers Association (PSTA) is a non government organization, which has launched major initiative to combat child labour and empower the adult workers at brick kilns in Punjab (<http://www.psta.org.pk/aboutus.html>). PSTA is responsible for education of more than 25,000 students in 460 Schools in brick kiln localities, along with 180 adult centers at brick kilns and 250 primary & middle/high schools in the Punjab. PSTA schools are sponsored by the communities. Its health program covers more than 40,000 brick kiln workers & their families, including vaccination services, parenting advice and family planning. It specially covers health issues concerning infants & mothers.

The Lunch Program of PSTA has enabled withdrawal of more than 1200 child workers from more than 45 targeted brick kilns localities. Parent Committees of the centers are provided funds on weekly basis to provide lunch to the school children after school is over. This care and help that PSTA offers people is to convince them that their children are receiving the basics for which they had to struggle so hard. Therefore the family employment rate has decreased, making way for a more peaceful and regular life style for these poor people. The model evolved by PSTA over the last decade for fighting child labour is low cost and result oriented as well as sustainable.

### **Independent Monitoring Association for Child Labor**

Independent Monitoring Association for Child Labor (IMAC) is a non-profit organization that provides workplace monitoring services, to any industry/ industrial establishments, against child labor as well as monitoring for other social and working conditions. It has the capacity and capability to provide consultancy services to any industry/ industrial agglomerations to devise and setup a workplace monitoring system, execute setting up of a monitoring system and training the required manpower, awareness raising about the menace of child labor and better working conditions and develop and execute programmes for social protection and rehabilitation of affected and afflicted groups of society.

IMAC was established in 2002 to sustain the workplace monitoring system against child labor setup by the ILO-IPEC in the soccer ball industry in Sialkot, Pakistan. In March 2003, it took over from the ILO-IPEC the child labor monitoring system along with all the technical know how, logistics and trained technical staff to run the system. Since then, it not only ran the system with the same transparency and credibility, rather it brought in innovative changes in the system

that gave new dimensions to the monitoring work. Steps are being taken under Sialkot Initiative to enhance the scope and credibility of IMAC. These include widening of the board of directors of IMAC to include representatives of workers and the government and to enhance the scope of its monitoring to cover all aspects of social compliance.

v. **Bonded Labour**

The Government of Punjab is fully committed to eradicate the problem of bonded labour from the province. Bonded labour is a curse condemned not only by religion but constitution and laws. The problem of bonded labour is an outcome of poverty, backwardness, illiteracy and outdated customs. The government is fully committed to eliminate this problem and is working with ILO and other civil society partners to deal with it.

Under the Bonded Labour Systems (Abolition) Act 1992, District Vigilance Committees (DVCs) have been formed in all districts of Punjab to monitor bonded labour problem. The DVCs are headed by the District Nazim (Mayor) and has representatives of press, bar, workers, employers and the relevant government agencies including police and local councilors as well as minorities. The provincial government has initiated efforts to build capacity of DVCs, through awareness creation and training, to play an effective role in combating bonded labour in their respective districts.

In Punjab the phenomenon of bonded labour is more common in the brick kiln sector. Recently detailed discussions with workers and their leaders from brick kilns, owners of brick kilns, NGOs and human rights bodies, and all relevant government agencies were held by the Labour Department. Some of the initiatives taken by Government of the Punjab to eliminate bonded labour from the province include:

- **National Identity Cards:**  
An important demand of the workers at brick kilns was that they are disenfranchised as they do not possess national identity cards. Government of the Punjab, with support from National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), has launched a campaign to issue computerized national identity cards (CNIC) to workers and their families employed at brick kilns. This will empower bonded laborers and their families and enable them to gain access to various rights and facilities granted to citizens of Pakistan. So far over 11000 workers have been facilitated to acquire National ID Cards
- **Registration of brick kilns:**  
The Labour & HR Department has conducted a survey of all the brick kilns in the province and plans to register all of them under the Factories Act. Most of the brick kilns in Punjab have already been registered and a model contract is being worked out so the financial transactions between the workers and employers can be recorded and an arbitration mechanism established in case of default. A plan is being made with the assistance of Literacy Department to establish non formal education centers at the clusters of brick kilns. Approximately 3456 out of the 3858 brick kilns in Punjab have been registered.